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Letter dated 1 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention a statement on human rights in Nepal, issued on 30 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 116 (b).

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 1 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on human rights in Nepal, issued on 30 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the decision by Prime Minister Koirala's Government in Nepal to extend the mandate of the Deuba Commission, which has been set up to create a cross-party consensus among the country's democratic groups and pave the way for negotiations with the Maoist insurgents. In the European Union's view a negotiating process offers the best chance of resolving Nepal's problems for the longer term.

The European Union has observed with growing concern the escalation of the internal conflict following the declaration of the people's war more than four years ago. Maoist attacks against representatives of the democratic State and civilians are always inacceptable and, frequently, barbarian. The avowed aim of the insurgents is to overturn the democratic order.

The European Union upholds the Government of Nepal's right to defend the country's newly established democracy in countering this terrorist insurgency. The European Union notes that the democratic State has the sole right to use legitimate force to preserve the rights and security of its citizens. The European Union believes that the authorities in Nepal must seek to establish basic security and an environment in which developmental efforts to overcome poverty can be pursued, and that the insurgency hinders the development process.

The Union notes that a number of international authorities including the United Nations special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, Amnesty International and the United States State Department have reported on extensive human rights abuses by both the insurgents and the Nepal police following the Maoists' declaration of the people's war.

The European Union calls on the Maoist insurgents to call an immediate halt to their violence and on the Nepalese Government to ensure that its representatives act uniquely within the bounds of the law.

The European Union also recalls that it is the responsibility of the Government in Kathmandu, through effective leadership and proper governance, to investigate allegations of extremely serious human rights abuses by the Nepalese police, including extrajudicial killings, torture and disappearances, and systematically to prosecute those responsible. The Government must, in the view of the European Union, issue strong and clear guidelines to the Nepal police to avoid the recurrence of such abuses in the future. The culture of impunity must be ended.

The European Union therefore strongly urges both parties to redouble their efforts to create the necessary conditions to enter into early and serious negotiations leading to a full and permanent peace.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.